

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 7, line 8 with the following:

FIG. 3 illustrates another example of a coding parameter that may be used to decide whether or not to selectively skip deblock filtering. The image block 44 from image frame 40 is compared with reference block 44' from the reference frame 42 pointed to by the motion vector MV1 as previously illustrated in FIG. 2. A residual block 44" is output from the comparison between image block 44 and reference block 44'. A transform 50 is performed on the residual block 44" creating a transformed block ~~44~~ 44''' of transform coefficients. In one example, the transform 50 is a Discrete Cosine Transform. The transformed block ~~44~~ 44''' includes a D.C. components 52 and A.C. components 53.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 8, line 1 with the following:

FIG. 4 illustrates the transformed residual blocks ~~44~~ 44''' and ~~46~~ 46'''. The D.C. components 52 from the two transformed blocks ~~44~~ 44''' and ~~46~~ 46''' are compared in processor 54. If the D.C. components are the same or within some range of each other, the processor 54 notifies a deblock filter operation 56 to skip deblock filtering between the border of the two adjacent blocks 44 and 46. If the D.C. components 52 are not similar, then no skip notification is initiated and the border between blocks 44 and 46 is deblock filtered.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 8, line 7 with the following:

In one example, the skip mode filtering may be incorporated into the Telecommunications Sector of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU-T) proposed

H.26L encoding scheme. The H.26L scheme uses 4x4 integer Discrete Cosine Transform (DCT) blocks. If desired, only the D.C. component of the two adjacent blocks may be checked. However some limited low frequency A.C. coefficients may likewise be checked, especially when the image blocks are larger sizes, such as 9x9 or 16x16 blocks. For example, the upper D.C. component 52 and the three lower frequency A.C. transform coefficients 53 for block 44 ~~44''~~ maybe compared with the upper D.C. component 52 and three lower frequency A.C. transform coefficients 53 for block ~~46~~46''. Different combinations of D.C. and/or any of the A.C. transform coefficients can be used to identify the relative similarity between the two adjacent blocks 44 and 46.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 11, line 4 with the following:

It is then determined whether the residual coefficients for the two adjacent blocks are similar. If there is no significant difference between the image residuals of the adjacent blocks, for example, the two blocks j and k have the same ~~of~~ or similar D.C. component ($dc(j) \cong dc(k)$), then the deblock filtering process in box 104 is skipped. Skip mode filtering then moves to the next interblock boundary in box 106 and conducts the next comparison in decision box 102. Skip mode filtering can be performed for both horizontally adjacent blocks and vertically adjacent blocks.